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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: UAE, FRANCE AND THE U.S.; ARABS
AND IRAN

11. SUMMARY:

A U.A.E. columnist in "Al-Ittihad" contrasts Arabs' selective reference to terminologies of martyrdom versus terrorism which he believes are largely nourished by Iran.

In light of France's recent cooperation with the U.A.E. on a French naval base, a U.A.E. intellectual in "Al-Khaleej" does not believe that the U.A.E. should rely on America to control Gulf security affairs and that it should move away from any American follies in case the United States is planning a military strike against Iran.
End Summary.

12. Under the headline "New players: U.A.E. and France", U.A.E. professor, Dr. AbdulKhaleq Abdullah, wrote 02/26 op-ed in Sharjah-based daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000):

"U.A.E. sources confirm that the cooperation between Abu Dhabi and Paris was given more attention and weight than needed. There isn't any actual presence of a French military base on the U.A.E. territories. This did not happen and will not happen in the future. All what was agreed upon between the U.A.E. and France was a modest naval base and normal logistical facilitation, steps already made in the rest of the countries bordering the Arabian Gulf. The proposed navy treaty does not exceed two small blocks on the Arabian Gulf to host about four hundred military personnel and to receive French vessels that have been permanently present in the region since 1991. These logistical arrangements do not impair the sovereignty of the U.A.E. nor do they affect its neutral position, and above all, these arrangements are not directed against any particular country in the region."

"Singling out Washington to control Gulf security affairs is uncomfortable. The U.A.E. message is clear: it does not want to count a lot and for long on America's protection and wishes to diversify its sources of protection to avoid getting involved in any potential adventures taken by the American military in the region. If the United States is planning a military strike against Iran, the U.A.E. must move away from any American follies. And if Washington was to form any future political deal with Iran, it is important for the U.A.E. to search for alternatives. Our strong ties with Washington are not reassuring and our confidence placed on the United States is not at its right place. It is wise for a small

State like the UAE to think outside the context of a close security link with the United States."

"Iran promised to re-consider its provocative military arrangements against Abu Musa's two islands during the official visit of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid to Tehran. Tehran's visit was important, but it is difficult to believe Iran's promises or to predict what Tehran can do because no matter how strong the level of understanding reached between the U.A.E. and Iran, strategic and security challenges posed by Iran can never be underestimated or dismissed. To have a strategic deal with Iran requires first developing our self-defensive capabilities."

"Having close ties with France or with any other country is not the solution. But what is certain here is that the second largest economy in the Arab region, like the U.A.E., has gained more trust and additional safety throughout its strategic cooperation with France. As for France, the fifth largest economy in the world, it has confirmed that it has vital interests in the Arabian Gulf, and it has an agenda that does not meet with the American agenda. This step is modest but has huge and clear strategic objectives. The messages here are addressed to all."

13. Under the headline "Emad Magneyah and the conflict of martyrdom versus terrorism," U.A.E. columnist, Mohammed Al-Hammadi, wrote 02/27 in Abu Dhabi-based Arabic semi-official daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000):

"Some Arabs insist on a "selective" reference to terminologies of martyrdom and terrorism as they consider whoever kills others and die is a heroic martyr whereas whoever comes to their nations and kills their children on their territories is considered a terrorist and a criminal! Sectarianism was not as flourishing as it was prior

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to Hezbollah's hyper strength. It seems that there are players who are nourishing these, and there is no doubt that Iran is playing an organized role in this issue."

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